

How to Create and Plan a Neighborhood Improvement Grant

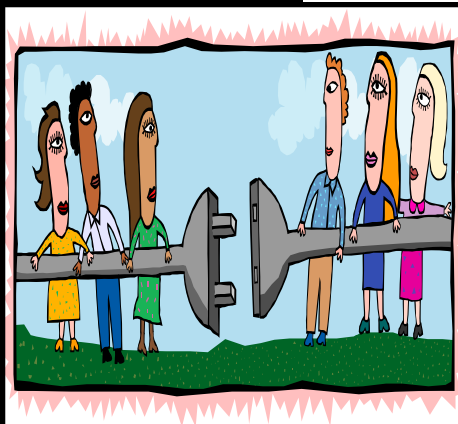
It can seem overwhelming, when a neighborhood has to organize a project.

This pamphlet is designed to take you through the steps in creating and planning a project - while maximizing your time and resources.

Step A. Creating a Project

The first step is to develop the vision for a community project.

- Begin by taking a walk with your neighbors through your neighborhood and let your imagination go!
- Host a neighborhood get-together to attract neighbors that have not been involved in association activities to start sharing visions for the neighborhood.
- Develop and distribute a survey in the neighborhood.
- Make sure that all neighborhood residents are given the opportunity to be part of the decision making and implementing.
- Ask the question, would a Neighborhood Improvement Grant be a solution to a neighborhood problem?
- Has the neighborhood included community partners to vision with them?



Make the connection!
Organize a neighborhood project that will benefit your community and obtain the funds through a Neighborhood Improvement Grant.

Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program is intended to give residents an opportunity to have direct input and influence into the improvement of Bloomington's neighborhoods. It is also intended to provide for non-traditional capital projects with community-wide benefit: the type that would not be covered by traditional City programs.

Improvement projects include:

- *Physical improvement projects with a public benefit*
- *Public art project*
- *Design for a future capital improvement through the Neighborhood Improvement Grant*

Step B. Mobilizing Commitment

Neighborhoods need the support and involvement of the residents for a successful project.



- Determine what people and sectors of the community should be included
- Convene a planning group
- Hold meetings that are inclusive and create a safe, comfortable environment
- Be efficient
- Record what happens
- Support and encourage group members

Step C. Developing the Action Plan



The Action Plan will make your vision concrete and it will show you how to implement strategies to attain your objectives.

- List the neighborhoods: “Resources”, “Barriers” and “Steps, Task ,Actions.”
- Brainstorm all the resources available to complete the project—talents, contracts, materials and supplies.
- Rank resources from the most important to least important.
- Brainstorm all the potential barriers to implementing the project.
- Brainstorm all the steps, actions and tasks that need to occur to carry out a successful project.
- Assign a timeline to each of the items.

- Think about how resources and steps, tasks or actions can eliminate barriers.
- Determine who is going to take the lead in the project
- Determine who is responsible for each step, task or action.
- Keep everyone informed
- Ensure member accountability by making supportive phone calls and issuing reports of progress.



Step D. The Action Plan Checklist

The Action plan should be: Complete, Clear and Current

- Review the action plan carefully, has the following areas been addressed?
- Assigned leader for the project.
- Leveraging of funds, partnerships and collaborations.
- Budget (figures and support information).
- Volunteers and resources.
- Materials and supplies (pricing, ordering and delivery).
- Paperwork (letter of intent, application, invoices).
- Project feasibility, design developed in conformance with all City codes.
- Well established ongoing maintenance plan for the life the project.
- Has the work plan (page 4 of application) been established for each of the task in the overall project?
- Ensure each member understands their specific task responsibilities.
- Well established lines of communication.



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Remember to:



- *Consult with HAND staff about your project ideas and application
- *Demonstrate neighborhood involvement
- *Make sure to check with Public Works if your project is in the public right of way.
- *Check with the Planning Dept. to make sure your project is in compliance with City codes or if it needs a variance.
- *Before you dig make sure you check with Holey Moley at 1-800-382-5544.
- *Have someone review your application to make sure that it is complete and the presentation of your project can be well comprehended.
- *Most of all have fun! Take the time to reflect and enjoy the process of working with your neighbors on your Neighborhood Improvement Grant.